



News Release

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Immunization rates for toddlers improve for some vaccines

More children are protected against vaccine-preventable diseases

OLYMPIA — New state-by-state information from a Centers for Disease Control survey shows that immunization rates for children between 19 and 35 months old in Washington have improved for some vaccines while rates for other vaccines stayed the same.

“It’s encouraging to see more children getting the right immunizations at the right times,” said Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. “The improved rates show that parents are taking preventable diseases seriously. We need to keep working hard so that all children are protected.”

The 2010 National Immunization Survey shows Washington is meeting the state and national goal of vaccinating 90 percent of young children against polio, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, and rubella. Our state rate is below 90 percent for vaccination against other diseases including whooping cough, hepatitis A, chickenpox, and pneumococcal vaccines. Whooping cough continues to circulate widely here; and there have been four cases of measles in Washington already this year.

We made great improvement in our rates for *Haemophilus Influenzae* type b (Hib), (an increase from 48 percent to 64 percent) and rotavirus vaccine (from 21 to 50 percent). These rates are lower than the national average of 67 percent for Hib and 59 percent for rotavirus, and well below the state and national goal of 90 percent for each individual vaccine.

The CDC survey also shows that 71 percent of Washington toddlers have completed the recommended vaccination series. The national average is 73 percent. Although there’s been improvement, we’re still behind the state and national goal of 80 percent. The series includes six vaccines (DTaP, polio, MMR, hepatitis B, pneumococcal and chickenpox), most require multiple doses to achieve full protection. To be counted as complete, a child must have all the

recommended doses by 35 months of age. Missing or delaying even one dose leaves kids at risk for catching and spreading a vaccine-preventable disease. Parents who have questions or concerns about immunizing their children should talk with a health care provider about the benefits and risks of vaccine.

In most cases, vaccines cause no side effects or only mild reactions like fever or soreness at the injection site. Severe reactions are rare. There is no evidence linking vaccines to autism or any other serious health condition.

Washington makes it easy for all kids to get vaccinated in their regular health care provider's office, by offering all recommended vaccines for kids under 19 at no cost through the state's Childhood Vaccine Program that is supported by federal and state funds. Health care providers may charge an office visit or administration fee. The administration fee may be waived for those who can't pay.

Parents should go to their regular health care providers for childhood immunizations. For help finding a provider or an immunization clinic, call your local health agency (www.doh.wa.gov/LHJMap/LHJMap.htm) or the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.

The Department of Health's Immunization and Child Profile Office works to prevent vaccine-preventable diseases, promote healthy families, increase use of preventive health care for children and adolescents, and provide vaccines at no cost for all children under age 19.

More information on immunizations is on the Department of Health [Immunization and Child Profile Office website](http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/Immunize) (www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/Immunize). The [National Immunization Survey](http://www.cdc.gov/nis/) (www.cdc.gov/nis/) is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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